

DRINKING WATER WARNING

***E. coli* is present in Fairhaven, Marion. Mattapoisett and Rochester Town Water**

BOIL YOUR WATER BEFORE USING

We collected routine samples on Tuesday, October 5, 2021. We were notified by the lab on Wednesday, October 6, 2021, that distribution samples were total coliform positive, *E. coli* positive. We notified MassDEP the same day we were notified by the lab of the sample results. We will be collecting repeat samples on Thursday, October 7, 2021, within 24 hours of notification by the lab, as required. These bacteria can make you sick and are especially a concern for people with weakened immune systems.

Bacterial contamination can occur when increased run-off enters the drinking water source (for example, following heavy rains). It can also happen due to a break in the distribution system (pipes) or a failure in the water treatment process.

What should I do? What does this mean?

- **DO NOT DRINK THE WATER WITHOUT BOILING IT FIRST.** Bring all water to a boil, let it boil for one minute and let it cool before using, or use bottled water. Boiled or bottled water should be used for drinking, making ice, brushing teeth, washing dishes, and food preparation until further notice. Boiling kills bacteria and other organisms in the water.
- Food establishments must boil the water for 5 minutes; large volumes of water need 5 minutes!
- Discard any ice, beverages, formula, and uncooked foods that were prepared with water from the public water system on or after October 5, 2021.
- **Coliforms are bacteria which are naturally present in the environment and are used as an indicator that other, potentially-harmful, bacteria may be present. **
- **E. coli are bacteria whose presence indicates that the water may be contaminated with human or animal wastes. Human pathogens in these wastes can cause short-term effects, such as diarrhea, cramps, nausea, headaches, or other symptoms. They may pose a greater health risk for infants, young children, the elderly, and people with severely compromised immune systems. **
- The symptoms above are not caused only by organisms in drinking water. If you experience any of these symptoms and they persist, you may want to seek medical advice. People at increased risk should seek advice from their healthcare providers about drinking this water.

What is being done?

We have started temporary chlorination of the distribution systems and will be flushing the system over the next several days to draw the chlorinated water into the distribution systems. We will inform you when tests show no bacteria are present and you no longer need to boil your water.

For more information, Fairhaven residents should contact Jeff Furtado, Water Superintendent, at 508-979-4032. Mattapoisett resident should contact Henri Renaud, Water Superintendent at 508-7584161 and Marion and Rochester residents should contact Nathaniel Munafo, Director of Public Works at 508-748-3540 (Water Dept. office, messages will be retrieved periodically, and we will return calls as soon as possible). General guidelines on ways to lessen the risk of infection by bacteria and other disease-causing organisms are available from the EPA Safe Drinking Water Hotline at 1-800-426-4791.

**Please share this information with all the other people who drink this water, especially those who may not have received this notice directly (for example, people in apartments, nursing homes, schools, and businesses). You can do this by posting this notice in a public place or distributing copies by hand or mail. **

This notice is being sent to you by Mattapoisett River Valley Water District. State Water System ID#: 4173001.

Date distributed: October 6, 2021.